

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DHA-02 AID-05 ORM-01 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OPR-02 OMB-01 /085 W

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R 071123Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0073

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1583

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, ET, SU

SUBJ: SUDANESE/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS WORSEN

BEGIN SUMMARY. NON-ARRIVAL KHARTOUM OF EPMG DELEGATION FOR BORDER TALKS, PLUS ALLEGATION IN ADDIS MEDIA THAT 6,000 SUDANESE REFUGEES HAVE FLED TO ETHIOPIA, HAVE BROUGHT ETHIOPIAN/SUDANESE RELATIONS TO LOWEST EBB IN MANY MONTHS. WHILE RESULT COULD BE GREATER GOS COOPERATION WITH ERITREAN INSURGENTS, GOS HANDLING REFUGEE STORY SUGGESTS CONTINUED SUDANESE DESIRE MAINTAIN USEFUL CONTACTS WITH EPMG. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN JAMAL MUHAMMED AHMED TOLD AMBASSADOR LATE JULY 5 THAT EPMG DELEGATION SCHEDULED ARRIVE HERE EARLIER IN DAY FOR LONG-BRUITED BILATERAL TALKS (PARA 2 KHARTOUM 1212, NOTAL) HAD FAILED APPEAR. AHMED HAD CALLED SUDANESE AMBASSADOR TO ADDIS FAKHR AL-DIN MUHAMMED HOME TO ASSIST AND MADE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS RECEIVE GROUP. AT LAST MINUTE, HOWEVER, MESSAGE HAD BEEN RECEIVED LATE JULY 4 STATING DELEGATION UNABLE MAKE TRIP AS SCHEDULED BECAUSE ETHIOPIAN MINDEF TRAVELLING IN PROVINCES. NO NEW DATE FOR SESSION WAS
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PROPOSED.

2. AHMED WENT ON TO COMPLAIN ABOUT PUBLICITY IN ADDIS ALLEGING 6,000 SUDANESE REFUGEES HAD RECENTLY ENTERED ETHIOPIA (ADDIS 7867). HE HAD PERSONALLY CONTACTED SOUTHERN REGION VP ALIER WHO HAD CATEGORICALLY DENIED STORY (UNHCR SOURCE HERE HAS SEPARATELY PROFESSED IGNORANCE TO US RE ANY SUCH MOVEMENT). AS RESULT, AHMED SAID FONMINISTRY WOULD BE ISSUING DENIAL JULY 6 IN ORDER SET RECORD STRAIGHT. HE STRESSED STATEMENT WOULD BE CAREFULLY DRAFTED, AND WOULD NOT MENTION ETHIOPIA BY NAME, IN ORDER AVOID SPOILING ALL CHANCES FOR NIMEIRI'S MEDIATION EXERCISE. STATEMENT DULY APPEARED JULY 6 DENYING "PUBLISHED (REPORTS) IN A FRIENDLY STATE". ETHIOPIA UNMENTIONED BUT STATEMENT, NO DOUBT WITH TONGUE-IN-CHEEK, CONCLUDES GRATUITOUSLY THAT "THERE NO REASON FOR SUDANESE NATIONALS TO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY WHERE LIFE IS CARRIED ON NORMALLY UNDER NATIONAL UNITY WHICH NO LONGER ONE OF OUR ANXIETIES".

3. IN SEPARATE TALK WITH AMBASSADOR JULY 6, FAKHR AL-DIN MUHAMMED INDICATED HE NOT TOO SURPRISED BY NON-ARRIVAL EPMG DELEGATION. SAID HE HAD BEEN CALLED HOME TO EXPLAIN EPMG THINKING RE SUDAN AND MEDIATION BUT REALLY HAD NO ACCURATE EXPLANATION. HE LISTED NUMBER ITEMS WHICH HAD BEEN WORRYING ADDIS (ITEMS SIMILAR THOSE MENTIONED PARA 1 ADDIS 4963 NOTAL), BUT SAID HE FELT TIME HAD COME TERMINATE TIT-FOR-TAT DIPLOMACY, CONTINUATION OF WHICH WOULD ONLY NUDGE GOS CLOSER TO ELF. PROBLEM WAS SUDANESE "REACTED TOO SOON WHILE ETHIOPIANS NEVER REACTED AT ALL". AMBASSADOR MUHAMMED WENT TO EXPRESS CONCERN, AS HAD FONFIN, AT WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS INCREASINGLY OPEN SALE MAOIST LITERATURE IN ADDIS. HE SAID HE WOULD BE RETURNING TO HIS POST JULY 11 BUT WAS PESSIMISTIC RE EARLY UPTURN IN ETHIOPIAN/SUDANESE RELATIONS.

4. MEANWHILE, WE UNDERSTAND NO DATE YET ESTABLISHED FOR ARRIVAL HERE NEW ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR. ACCORDING LATEST WORD AVAILABLE CHARGE, AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE HAS NOT YET LEFT NEW YORK.

5. COMMENT. EXACTLY HOW TO APPORTION BLAME FOR CURRENT CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPASSE IN ETHIOPIAN/SUDANESE RELATIONS SEEMS CLEARLY SOMETHING OF CHICKEN AND EGG SITUATION, BUT FACT IS THAT BILATERAL CONTACTS NOW AT LOWEST EBB IN MANY MONTHS. CONTINUATION SUCH SITUATION WOULD SEEM LIKELY ENCOURAGE GOS COOPERATION WITH ERITREAN INSURGENTS TO GREATER EXTENT THAN WE BELIEVE TRUE SO FAR. HOWEVER, GOS DEFERRAL PUBLIC DENIAL OF REFUGEE STORY UNTIL IT CLEAR BILATERAL TALKS WOULD

NOT TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED AND CAREFUL WORDING STATEMENT WHEN
RELEASED, SUDANESE HAVE NO WISH SEE TIES WITH ADDIS FURTHER
DETERIORATE.
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